

§ 402.109 Statistical sampling.

(a) *Purpose.* CMS or OIG may introduce the results of a statistical sampling study to show the number and amount of claims subject to sanction under this part that the respondent presented or caused to be presented.

(b) *Prima facie evidence.* The results of the statistical sampling study, if based upon an appropriate sampling and computed by valid statistical methods, constitute prima facie evidence of the number and amount of claims or requests for payment subject to sanction under § 402.1.

(c) *Burden of proof.* Once CMS or OIG has made a prima facie case, the burden is on the respondent to produce evidence reasonably calculated to rebut the findings of the statistical sampling study. CMS or OIG then has the opportunity to rebut this evidence.

§ 402.111 Factors considered in determinations regarding the amount of penalties and assessments.

(a) *Basic factors.* In determining the amount of any penalty or assessment, CMS or OIG takes into account the following:

(1) The nature of the claim, request for payment, or information given and the circumstances under which it was presented or given.

(2) The degree of culpability, history of prior offenses, and financial condition of the person submitting the claim or request for payment or giving the information.

(3) The resources available to the person submitting the claim or request for payment or giving the information.

(4) Such other matters as justice may require.

(b) *Criteria to be considered.* As guidelines for taking into account the factors listed in paragraph (a) of this section, CMS or OIG considers the following circumstances:

(1) *Aggravating circumstances of the incident.* An aggravating circumstance is any of the following:

(i) The services or incidents were of several types, occurring over a lengthy period of time.

(ii) There were many of these services or incidents or the nature and circumstances indicate a pattern of

claims or requests for payment for these services or a pattern of incidents.

(iii) The amount claimed or requested for these services was substantial.

(iv) Before the incident or presentation of any claim or request for payment subject to imposition of a civil money penalty, the respondent was held liable for criminal, civil, or administrative sanctions in connection with a program covered by this part or any other public or private program of payment for medical services.

(v) There is proof that a respondent engaged in wrongful conduct, other than the specific conduct upon which liability is based, relating to government programs or in connection with the delivery of a health care service. (The statute of limitations governing civil money penalty proceedings does not apply to proof of other wrongful conduct as an aggravating circumstance.)

(2) *Mitigating circumstances.* The following circumstances are mitigating circumstances:

(i) All the services or incidents subject to a civil money penalty were few in number and of the same type, occurred within a short period of time, and the total amount claimed or requested for the services was less than \$1,000.

(ii) The claim or request for payment for the service was the result of an unintentional and unrecognized error in the process of presenting claims or requesting payment and the respondent took corrective steps promptly after discovering the error.

(iii) Imposition of the penalty or assessment without reduction would jeopardize the ability of the respondent to continue as a health care provider.

(3) *Other matters as justice may require.* Other circumstances of an aggravating or mitigating nature are taken into account if, in the interests of justice, they require either a reduction of the penalty or assessment or an increase in order to ensure the achievement of the purposes of this part.

(c) *Effect of aggravating or mitigating circumstances.* In determining the amount of the penalty and assessment